



United States Attorney's Office
District of Columbia

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PRESS RELEASE

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DISTRICT MAN FOUND GUILTY IN SHOOTING DEATH

– Victim was slain in the middle of Ninth Street NW –

WASHINGTON - A 22-year-old District man, Damone Williams, was found guilty Friday, July 9, 2010 of First Degree Premeditated Murder while Armed and related firearms offenses, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced today. The jury verdict followed a trial in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia and stemmed from a slaying that occurred in December 2006 in the 1700 block of 9th Street NW.

According to the evidence at trial, in the late hours of December 15, 2006, Williams was selling drugs – while armed with a firearm – near the intersection of 9th and U Streets NW. When police cars drove through the block, he left the area, leaving his pistol stashed behind to avoid being caught with it. After the police left the area, the defendant returned to discover that his pistol was missing. A witness said that Williams stated aloud that he believed the decedent had stolen his gun, and that he was going to “burn him up” in revenge.

Approximately three hours later, in the early morning hours of December 16, 2006, the defendant, the decedent, and a third person were observed walking down the 1700 block of 9th street, just two blocks from where Williams had claimed his pistol had been stolen. Moments later, the sound of gunshots rang throughout the block, and an eyewitness observed Williams with a pistol in his hand standing over the body of the decedent, Preston Johns. The victim, 29, was shot once in the left chest, once in the left shoulder and once in the back.

When police arrived, the decedent's body was found alone in the middle of 9th Street NW. No eyewitnesses to the actual shooting were ever found. Over the course of the next year, through diligent and thorough investigative work, the lead detective on the case, Metropolitan Police Department Detective Kostantinos Giannakoulis, aided by other members of the Metropolitan Police Department, identified and located several witnesses to events before and immediately after the slaying. Defendant Williams was arrested on February 14, 2008.

The jury verdict came after three days of deliberations. The jury found the defendant guilty of First Degree Premeditated Murder while Armed, Possession of a Firearm During a Crime of Violence, and Unlawful Possession of a Firearm by a Convicted Felon. Williams faces a

mandatory minimum sentence of thirty years' incarceration and a maximum of life when he is sentenced on November 5, 2010, by D.C. Superior Court Judge Michael L. Rankin.

In announcing the result, U.S. Attorney Machen commended MPD Detectives Kostantinos Giannakoulis and Thomas Webb of the Violent Crimes Branch, Officer Matthew Romeo, and Evidence Technicians Kemper Agee, Dwayne Mitchell, and Charles Graham. Finally, U.S. Attorney Machen expressed his appreciation to Intelligence Specialist Lawrence Grasso, paralegals Kalisha Johnson-Clark and Ethel Gregory, Litigation Support Specialists Leif Hickling and Kimberly Smith, Victim Witness Security Specialists Katina Adams, Michael Hailey, Tanya Via, and David Foster, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Pat Martin and Chris Kavanaugh, who investigated, indicted, and tried the case.

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